



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

DRAFT

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Focus on Low-Income Populations in the San Francisco Bay Area

October 2006

DRAFT

Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Focus on Low-Income Populations in the San Francisco Bay Area

Table of Contents

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	1
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Purpose of Coordinated Plan.....	4
1.2 MTC Approach to Completing the Plan.....	4
1.3 Low Income Population in the Bay Area.....	5
1.4 Bay Area Transportation Network.....	6
1.5 Previous MTC Transportation Planning Efforts Focused on the Needs of Low-Income Populations.....	8
SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF COUNTY AND REGIONAL WELFARE TO WORK PLANS	
2.1 County Welfare to Work Transportation Plans.....	8
2.2 Summary of Welfare to Work Transportation Needs.....	9
2.3 Summary of Welfare to Work Transportation Strategies.....	9
2.4 Updates to County Welfare to Work Transportation Plans.....	11
2.5 Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan.....	12
SECTION 3: SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM	
3.1 Community-based Transportation Planning Roll Out.....	14
3.2 Communities Identified for CBTP Program.....	15
3.3 Stakeholders Involved in the Process.....	16
3.4 Summary of Outreach Strategies.....	17
3.5 Summary of Transportation Gaps.....	20
3.6 Summary of Transportation Solutions.....	22
SECTION 4: SUMMARY.....	23
SECTION 5: APPENDICIES	
5.1 Executive Summaries of Regional and County Welfare to Work Plans	
5.2 Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan Goals and Strategies	
5.3 Community-based Transportation Planning Guidelines	
5.4 Executive Summaries of Completed Community-based Transportation Plans	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This component of the San Francisco Bay Area Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan focuses on the low-income populations in the region, and chronicles the extensive transportation planning that MTC has sponsored relative to this population.

Following state and federal welfare reform in the mid-1990s, MTC funded welfare to work transportation planning efforts in each of the nine Bay Area counties. This process brought together a variety of stakeholders, including transit operators, social service providers, as well as welfare recipients, to discuss the unique transportation needs of the Bay Area's Welfare to Work population. The end result of these discussions was a welfare to work transportation plan in each county that outlined strategies to pursue for improving mobility for those transitioning from welfare to work, as well as their families.

With the county welfare to work transportation plans completed or well underway, MTC embarked on producing a regional welfare to work plan. As part of this process, MTC reviewed the outcomes of the county planning efforts. County stakeholders identified barriers to implementing the transportation strategies highlighted in their plans. The regional welfare to work transportation plan developed a set of policy-level strategies that would help to overcome these obstacles and facilitate the implementation of many of the county solutions.

In 2002, MTC launched its community-based transportation planning (CBTP) program, a collaborative planning process involving community residents, community organizations, transit agencies, county congestion management agencies, MTC and other stakeholders. The program targets twenty-five low-income communities in the Bay Area and engages community residents in prioritizing their transportation needs. The end result of each planning process is a community-based transportation plan that provides a demographic analysis of the community, reviews existing neighborhood transportation service, documents community outreach strategies, lists community-prioritized transportation gaps, identifies transportation solutions, and proposes stakeholders to implement the plan. Eight plans that include ten of the twenty-five communities have been completed.

The table below summarizes the variety of strategies and solutions that have emerged from the county welfare to work transportation plans, the regional welfare to work transportation plan, and the completed community-based transportation plans. Details about these strategies are included in Sections 2.3, 2.5 and 3.6 of the plan.

Transportation Improvement Strategy/Solution	Strategy Emerged from:		
	County Welfare to Work Transportation Plans	Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan	Community- Based Transportation Plans
Improve transportation service/amenities	P		P
Improve Public information	P		P
Address children's transportation	P		P
Provide auto-based solutions	P		P

Transportation Improvement Strategy/Solution	Strategy Emerged from:		
	County Welfare to Work Transportation Plans	Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan	Community-Based Transportation Plans
Provide pedestrian solutions	P		P
Provide bicycle solutions	P		P
Institute transportation/land use solutions	P		P
Address transportation affordability	P		P
Develop employer-sponsored transportation solutions	P		P
Increase carpooling and vanpooling options	P		P
Increase overall funding for transportation services		P	
Address jurisdictional barriers for better coordination		P	
Implement pilot programs to test new strategies	P	P	P
Advocate for regulatory change to improve mobility options		P	
Improve transportation conditions for persons with disabilities accessing jobs or training		P	

To successfully implement these projects, several factors should be in place, including project ownership from appropriate lead agencies, funding, effective coordination among implementing agencies, and the ability to address other operational, institutional or funding barriers.

A number of transportation solutions emerging from the welfare to work and community-based transportation plans have already been implemented. In 2000, MTC established its Low-Income Flexible Transportation Program (LIFT) to fund a variety of unique, locally-based transportation services and programs designed to improve mobility for the region's low-income population. Through three LIFT funding cycles, MTC has funded 32 projects, programming \$13.7 million in federal and state dollars.

Through an update to its regional transportation plan in 2005, MTC created the Lifeline Transportation Program by dedicating up to \$216 million over 25 years for projects that improve mobility for low-income residents in the Bay Area. This funding, made up of federal and state money, is anticipated to be available in fiscal year (FY) 2008. To launch the program earlier, MTC allocated an additional \$18 million to fund projects in the three-year interim period. The program, which supercedes LIFT, will be administered at the county level, with funds allocated based on each county's share of regional poverty population.

The Lifeline program will support projects that are developed through a collaborative and inclusive planning process, improve transportation options for low-income residents in the Bay Area and address transportation barriers identified through a welfare to work transportation plan, a community-based transportation plan, or another documented collaborative planning process.

MTC will evaluate the interim Lifeline program prior to receiving the new Lifeline funds in FY 2008.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

On August 10, 2005, President Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA). SAFETEA provides \$286.4 billion in guaranteed funding for federal surface transportation programs over six years through fiscal year (FY) 2009, including \$52.6 billion for federal transit programs.

Starting in FY 2007, projects funded through three programs included in SAFETEA – Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) (Section 5316), New Freedom (Section 5317) and the Formula Program for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) – are required to be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. SAFETEA guidance issued by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) indicates that the plan should be a “unified, comprehensive strategy for public transportation service delivery that identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited income, lays out strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritizes services.”¹

FTA has also suggested that the coordinated plan should seek to maximize coverage of transportation services proposed for the three populations while minimizing service duplication.

1.2 MTC Approach to Completing Plan

Low-Income Component of Plan

MTC has dedicated considerable resources toward planning efforts that have focused on the transportation needs of low-income residents in the Bay Area. MTC has sponsored welfare to work transportation plans in each of the nine Bay Area counties, a regional welfare to work transportation plan, and numerous community-based transportation plans assessing the transportation needs in low-income communities. Each of these efforts is described in detail below. The process used to develop these plans is consistent with FTA’s guidance related to the key elements to include when completing the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan, including assessing transportation needs and gaps, creating an inventory of available services, proposing strategies to address service gaps and prioritizing implementation strategies. Therefore, MTC staff will complete the component of the plan that focuses on low-income populations in the Bay Area by summarizing the planning efforts completed to date.

Elderly and Disabled Component of Plan

While MTC has completed planning efforts related to elderly and disabled communities, MTC has not conducted in-depth planning that identifies transportation needs specific to the elderly and disabled population in the Bay Area as described in FTA’s guidance for the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. Therefore, a consultant will assist MTC in

¹ Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, *Elderly Individuals and Individuals With Disabilities, Job Access and Reverse Commute, New Freedom Programs and Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans: Notice of Public Meeting, Interim Guidance for FY06 Implementation, and Propose*, March 15, 2006

completing this component of the plan. This effort will involve an assessment of transportation needs for the elderly and disabled populations, an inventory of available services, identification of strategies to address service gaps and prioritization of implementation strategies.

Overlapping Needs and Strategies

Following the completion of both the low-income and elderly and disabled components of the plan, a section that evaluates the overlapping transportation needs of all three populations will be developed. Strategies to address the overlapping needs will be proposed.

1.3 Low Income Population in the Bay Area

Table 1 below illustrates the Bay Area population by poverty level based on 2000 Census data. Nearly 9% of the Bay Area population earns below 100% of the federal poverty level. In previous studies that focus on the Bay Area's low-income population, MTC has doubled the poverty level to 200% to account for the high cost of living in the Bay Area. This percentage is consistent with several Bay Area organizations that use income to determine program eligibility such as the Bay Area Food Banks and the Women Infant and Children (WIC) program that use 185% of the federal poverty level as the benchmark to make eligibility determinations². When looking at this threshold, approximately 21% of Bay Area residents earn below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Table 1

Bay Area Population by Poverty Level, 2000					
	< 100 % of Poverty Level		< 200 % of Poverty Level		
Year	Persons	Share	Persons	Share	Total Population*
2000	573,333	8.6%	1,374,211	20.6%	6,661,540
* Total population is persons for whom poverty status is determined. This excludes: institutionalized persons; military group quarters; college dormitories; and unrelated individuals Source: Census 2000 – Summary File 3, Table P88.					

Vehicle Availability

Auto ownership affects the transportation options available to Bay Area residents. Table 2 shows statistics on the availability of vehicles for households in the region. Overall, 90% of Bay Area households have access to one or more vehicles. Only 73% of low-income households have at least one vehicle, making low-income households more dependent on other modes of transportation than higher-income households.

² MTC's 2005 Equity Analysis

Table 2³

Census 2000 Share of Households by Vehicle Availability		
	Zero Vehicles	One or More Vehicles
Low-Income Households**	27.4%	72.6%
All Bay Area Households*	10.0%	90.0%
* Source: Census 2000 – Summary File 3, Tables H44 and HCT33I ** Households below 200% of the federal poverty level, 87Source: Census 2000 – PUMS 5% Sample Data		

Communities of Concern

As part of the update to the 2001 and the 2005 regional transportation plan, MTC conducted an environmental justice Equity Analysis, focusing on concentrations of low-income and minority populations in the Bay Area. MTC defined these areas as “communities of concern.” A community of concern was defined as a geographic area⁴ in which at least one of two conditions exist: (1) at least 30% of the households are below 200% of the federal poverty level and (2) 70% or more of the persons in the household are of the following descent: African American, Asian American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Multi-Racial (two or more races). These thresholds were used because, in terms of poverty, 20% of Bay Area households earn less than 200% of the federal poverty level as noted in Table 1. In terms of minority population, 50% of the Bay Area population is non-white. Therefore, to focus in on significant concentrations of poverty and minority populations in the Bay Area, the 70/30 thresholds were used.

Given these thresholds, there are forty-four communities of concern in the Bay Area. The following map illustrates the location of these communities graphically.

1.4 Bay Area Transportation Network

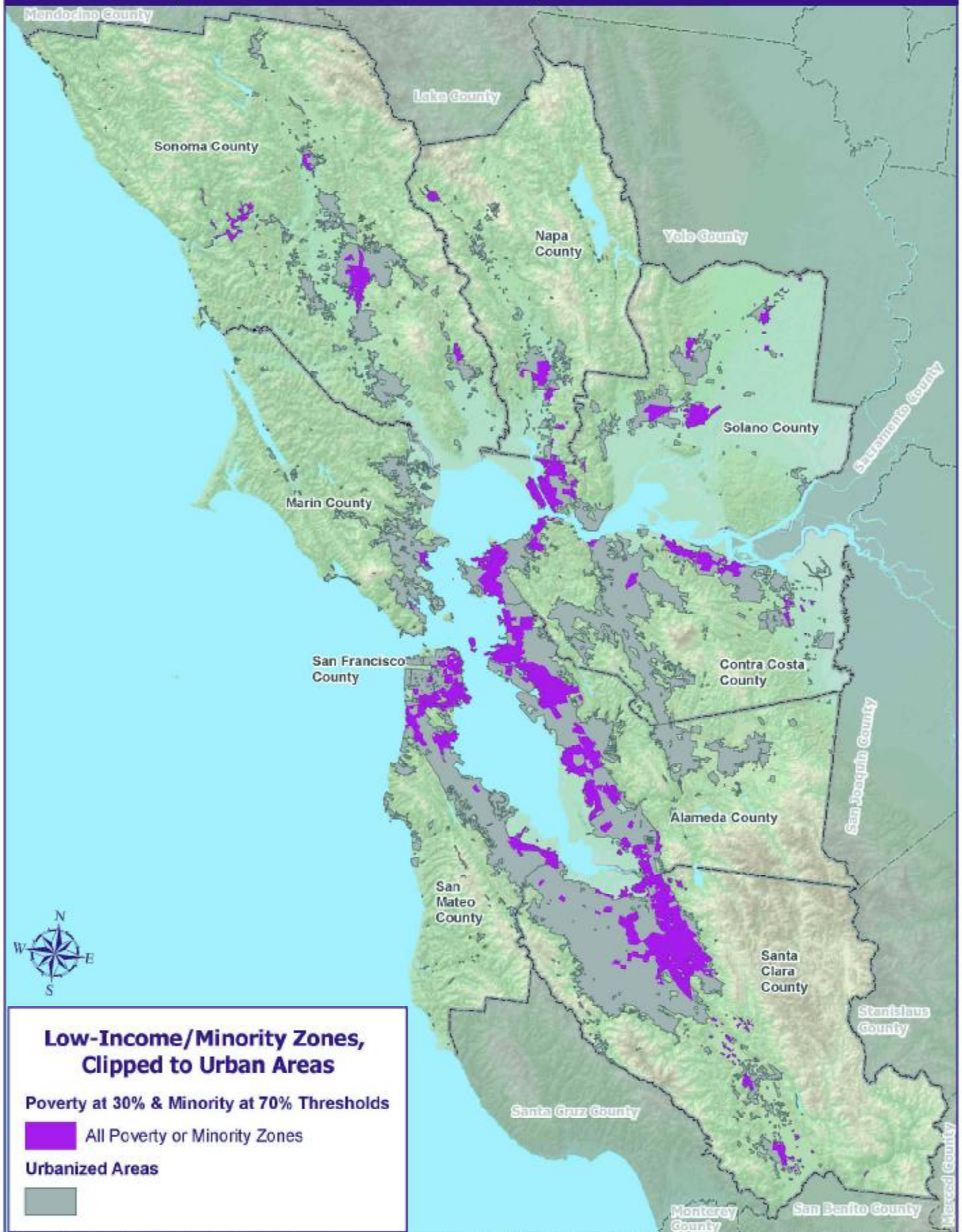
The transportation network in the Bay Area is extensive, with more than 1,400 miles of highways, over 300 miles of carpool lanes, eight toll bridges, 19,600 miles of local streets and roads, 9,860 miles of transit routes (including some 400 miles of rail transit), five commuter ferry lines, as well as bicycle and pedestrian routes⁵. Over twenty public transit operators provide bus and rail service throughout the region. This transportation network provides the starting point for identifying transportation gaps in the local planning efforts that are described in detail below.

³ Excerpted from 2005 MTC Equity Analysis

⁴ In both Equity Analyses, the unit of analysis was a Travel Analysis Zone, which is a small area neighborhood or community that serves as the smallest geographic basis for travel demand modeling.

⁵ MTC Citizens Guide, http://www.mtc.ca.gov/library/citizens_guide/basics.htm

Poverty at 30% & Minority at 70% Thresholds



1.5 Previous MTC Transportation Planning Efforts Focused on the Needs of Low-Income Communities

Following federal and state welfare reform in the late 1990s, MTC invested in several planning efforts that focused on the transportation needs of low-income residents in the Bay Area. MTC initiated this work by sponsoring welfare to work transportation plans in each of the nine Bay Area counties. Social service agency staff, transit agency staff, welfare recipients, as well as other stakeholders, worked together to create plans that identified the transportation needs of the welfare-to-work population, as well as strategies to address them.

MTC also completed a Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan. The goal of this plan was to identify ways to improve the transportation system to better respond to the needs of those transitioning from welfare to work, especially for those traveling across county boundaries or transit districts. The plan recommends regional policy and legislative strategies for MTC and its partners to pursue to further regional welfare-to-work transportation goals. This plan has also served as the area-wide Job Access Reverse Commute Plan for the JARC program.

Finally, in 2002, MTC launched the Community-based Transportation Planning (CBTP) Program, which funds a collaborative planning process in low-income communities throughout the Bay Area, engaging community residents, community-based organizations and agencies that serve low-income residents, transit operators, congestion management agencies and other stakeholders in the process. The outcome is a community-based transportation plan that includes locally identified and prioritized transportation needs, as well as strategies to address them.

The remainder of this low-income component of the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan provides a summary of these three planning processes and outcomes. Each effort is described below.

SUMMARY OF COUNTY AND REGIONAL WELFARE TO WORK PLANS

2.1 County Welfare to Work Transportation Plans

Following the passage of both federal and state welfare reform acts in the mid-1990s, MTC sponsored the development of welfare to work transportation plans in each county in the Bay Area. The planning process brought together key participants involved in implementing welfare reform in each county to look at ways to address the transportation needs of those transitioning from welfare to work. Those involved in the process included county social service agency staff, CalWORKs⁶ participants, childcare providers, employers, job trainers and education providers, as well as local transit operators. The goal was to identify potential transportation-related barriers associated with obtaining and retaining employment and develop workable options to eliminate these barriers.

The plans contain demographic information about CalWORKs participants in each county (e.g. residence, gender, ethnicity, etc.), information about employers and job opportunities in the county, existing transportation gaps and barriers, and strategies to address them. Outreach to

⁶ CalWORKs, or the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids program, is the welfare to work program for the state of California.

identify the transportation gaps varied by county, but included conducting focus groups, interviews and strategy sessions with key stakeholders and CalWORKs participants, as well as distributing surveys.

2.2 Summary of Welfare to Work Transportation Needs

The transportation needs outlined by CalWORKs participants and the agencies that serve them were similar across the nine-Bay Area counties. In terms of transit, improvements were needed with transit route connections, hours of operation, reliability and access to essential destinations, such as job and training sites, child care/schools and social service agencies. Improvements related to accessing transportation information were also needed, including information in languages other than English. Some also suggested that training on how to use transit and how to make connections would be helpful. Finally, safety at transit stops was considered a deterrent to using transit in some areas.

Both transit and auto affordability were also considered transportation barriers. Transit fares, especially youth fares, and the cost of transfers both within one transit system and to another system were raised as important areas to address. Using a car is often not a viable transportation option for CalWORKs families given the costs associated with auto ownership (purchasing, insuring and maintaining a vehicle), but may be the most effective way to meet their transportation needs. However, due to the costs, auto ownership is often unattainable for CalWORKs households.

Finally, children's transportation was raised as barrier to accessing jobs. Many CalWORKs parents need to make multiple trips to childcare or school before they arrive at work, so safe and reliable transportation for children was cited as an area to address.

2.3 Summary of Welfare to Work Transportation Strategies

A number of transportation strategies and solutions emerged to address the transportation needs cited in Section 2.2. They are drawn from all nine-county welfare to work plans, and are categorized below.

Adult Transportation Service

- Provide taxi/rental car vouchers or guaranteed ride programs for emergency transportation situations
- Provide shuttle service to improve access to essential destinations (e.g. job training or One-Stop Career Centers)
- Provide community-oriented shuttle services to connect with trunk-line transit service and essential destinations
- Offer 24-hour transit service on key transit routes
- Provide additional off-peak transit or shuttle service
- Improve transit connections and transfers
- Improve access to existing transportation services
- Create van or small bus service for those whose live/work sites are not served by transit, or have jobs shifts outside transit operating hours

- Create volunteer driver programs for CalWORKs non-regular trips (particularly in rural areas)
- Identify under-utilized transportation resources (i.e. faith or community-based organizations and paratransit)
- Continue to support transit routes that serve low-income residential areas

Transportation Amenities

- Improve transit stop security and amenities

Improvements in Transportation Information

- Hire mobility managers to coordinate and facilitate transportation information to CalWORKs participants
- Create travel training programs to assist CalWORKs participants with making transit trips
- Provide transportation information in languages other than English
- Improve communication between CalWORKs participants and county staff, employers and others providing information to low-income populations about transportation options
- Provide outreach on regional 511 program
- Purchase electronic kiosks to provide transportation information in public areas
- Create advisory committees to monitor implementation of Welfare to Work Transportation Plans
- Implement a process for providing feedback to transportation agencies for transportation service development

Transportation Affordability

- Provide reduced-cost transit passes for eligible low-income persons
- Clarify existing CalWORKs subsidies for participants and their children
- Create “class passes” (subsidized fares) for college students

Bicycle Strategies

- Develop bike routes to schools, child care facilities, colleges and job centers for adults and children

Children’s Transportation

- Provide shuttle service for school and daycare trips for children, both before and after school
- Provide shuttle service for after-hours childcare
- Create “school pools” that match parents to carpool children
- Expand existing child care transportation services
- Develop and implement policies to reduce the demand for children’s transportation, such as encouraging after-school care at schools and improving child care in high-density CalWORKs neighborhoods
- Investigate school bus funding and policies to increase the use of school buses for elementary and middle schools

Carpooling and Vanpooling

- Increase carpooling and vanpooling usage among CalWORKs participants
- Offer subsidies for new carpool and vanpool CalWORKs commuters

Auto-Related Solutions

- Provide subsidies for auto repair and auto insurance
- Create partnerships between auto repair programs and CalWORKs programs
- Recommend CalWORKs program pay for AAA Emergency Roadside Service membership
- Create auto loan or donation programs for employed CalWORKs participants
- Explore creation of a county fleet car purchase program for CalWORKs participants
- Create programs that teach skills to own and operate a car, handle emergency situations
- Hire court advocates to assist with clearing driving records
- Institute car sharing programs

Employer-Sponsored Strategies

- Encourage employers to offer subsidized transportation to employees (through shuttles or transit passes)
- Develop pilot employer transportation programs with employers who hire CalWORKs participants
- Provide transportation materials to employers for distribution to employees
- Improve communication between employers and public agencies
- Trade marketing services for private transportation services (employers would fund taxi/van service to CalWORKs participants in exchange for advertising/marketing on taxis or vans)
- Offer training programs through transit operators for CalWORKs participants so that they learn skills to be employed with public or private transportation operators.

Transportation and Land Use Solutions

- Build childcare centers near transit hubs, new housing and other developments

These solutions were developed to address the transportation needs that were raised during the outreach phase of the welfare to work transportation planning processes. While some strategies may have been developed in just one county, they have the potential to be implemented throughout the Bay Area to address similar transportation needs.

The executive summaries of each of the Welfare to Work transportation plans are attached in Appendix 5.1.

2.4 Updates to County Welfare to Work Transportation Plans

While MTC funded the original welfare to work transportation plans in each of the nine counties, two counties have updated their plans that were initially completed in the late 1990s. Contra Costa County completed their update – the Low-Income Transportation Action Plan – in January 2006. Santa Clara County’s updated plan was completed in February 2006.

New transportation strategies coming out of these two updates that are not included in the list in Section 2.3 include:

Adult Transportation Service

- Increase transit frequencies to reduce wait times

Improvements in Transportation Information

- Improve signage at bus stops, including route numbers and maps

Bicycle Strategies

- Provide low-cost bicycles to CalWORKs families

Children's Transportation

- Establish working groups to assess new transportation programs to schools
- Increase transit service before/after school

Auto-related solutions

- Provide free or low-cost driver training for CalWORKs participants
- Provide auto inspection services for CalWORKs participants who are purchasing cars

Other

- Coordinate County transportation efforts and build relationships with employers and Workforce Development Boards

While the other Bay Area counties have not formally updated their plans, in many cases stakeholders continue to work towards implementing the strategies outlined in the original plans.

2.5 Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan

As the county welfare to work transportation plans were nearing completion, MTC began to develop a regional welfare to work transportation plan to assess the outcomes of the county planning efforts, identify common regional barriers and recommend strategies to assist the region's low-income workers reach essential destinations. The regional plan was to be not only a summary of efforts to date, but a starting point for future work.

There were three phases to the planning effort. The first phase involved a review of the status of the county planning efforts. In phase two, a set of policy and program strategies to address identified transportation gaps and barriers was developed. Proposed transportation strategies were reviewed and finalized by stakeholders in phase three.

During the review of the county planning efforts, several obstacles to implementing transportation solutions highlighted in the county welfare to work plans were identified. It was noted that regional assistance and attention would be helpful in overcoming these obstacles. Identified actions included the need to (1) incorporate welfare to work transportation solutions in local and regional transportation plans to guide funding and service priorities, (2) secure additional local and regional funding, (3) cut through state and federal bureaucratic red tape to facilitate the quick implementation of creative solutions, (4) expand local expertise in

transportation solution implementation, particularly by learning the lessons of other communities, (5) address jurisdictional issues between agencies and (6) address the complex issues of children's transportation and transportation affordability.

Regional strategies and actions were developed by MTC staff, consultants and MTC's Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Working Group, a collaboration of transportation and human services agency representatives. The overall strategies, to be implemented by MTC and its partner agencies, were as follows⁷:

- Address the transportation needs of low-income individuals in key transportation plans developed by MTC, transit agencies, congestion management agencies and other transportation-related plans sponsored by local governments.
- Increase funding for transportation services that will benefit low-income individuals to reach essential destinations (jobs, schools and childcare) by conducting a coordinated advocacy campaign at the local, state and federal levels.
- Work to achieve state and federal legislation and regulatory change to improve mobility for low-income individuals through a joint campaign by transportation and social service agencies.
- Fill the most critical transportation gaps for the low-income population by developing a focused, regional set of pilot programs and projects.
- Address cross-jurisdictional barriers (schools, social services, transportation/land-use, etc.) through joint planning processes.

Specific actions and other details related to these strategies are contained in Appendix 5.2.

The Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan, which was completed in June 2001, was updated in February 2003 with a study that focused on evaluating the public transportation barriers that persons with disabilities might have in accessing jobs or training in the Bay Area. The study, which was prompted by the New Freedom Initiative introduced in 2001, concluded with several strategies to improve transportation conditions, including:

- Improving the quality of paratransit and fixed-route service – i.e. on-time performance, trip length and wait time, service reliability and driver/customer relations
- Partnering with Welfare to Work programs to meet the transportation needs of both the welfare to work population and disability community seeking employment
- Increasing the number of accessible bus stops by coordinating with municipalities and transit operators

⁷ Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan, June 2001, pp. 12-20

- Working with employers to raise awareness about the transportation barriers that disabled employees' may face, and providing guidelines to encourage flextime, telecommuting, etc.
- Identifying approaches to address transportation barriers specific to particular disabilities (e.g. cognitive, visually impaired, etc.)
- Monitoring the status of the New Freedom Initiative and other sources for funding.

The complete study is found in Appendix C of the Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY-BASED TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM

3.1 Community-based Transportation Planning Program

In 2002, MTC launched the Community-based Transportation Planning (CBTP) program, a collaborative planning process involving community residents, community organizations, transit agencies, congestion management agencies (CMAs) and MTC. The program evolved out of two reports completed in 2001 – the *Lifeline Transportation Network Report* and the *Environmental Justice Report*. Both were completed through an update to the regional transportation plan.

The Lifeline Report reviewed transit service provided in low-income communities throughout the Bay Area by evaluating routes that:

- Provided service to neighborhoods with high concentration of low-income households;
- Provided service to areas with high concentrations of essential destinations, such as schools, jobs, etc.;
- Provided core trunkline service as identified by transit operators; or
- Served as a key regional link.

The analysis identified gaps in service: both spatial – where service was needed but did not exist, and temporal – hours of transit operation and frequency. The report recommended that filling transit service gaps should be developed at the local level through community-based transportation planning, and would include a variety of transportation solutions in addition to improvements in fixed-route transit.

Likewise, the Environmental Justice Report identified the need to support local transportation planning efforts in low-income and minority communities throughout the region. The report recommended community-based transportation planning as a way to engage the residents of low-income and minority communities in a collaborative transportation planning process involving transit operators, community-based organizations and other stakeholders.

The first step in creating the CBTP program involved developing program guidelines. They were developed with the following objectives in mind:

- The planning process should be a collaborative effort among local residents, community-based organizations (CBOs), transit operators, county congestion management agencies (CMAs) and MTC. CMAs -- county agencies responsible for congestion management planning, implementation, as well as a variety of county-wide transportation projects and planning -- were designated to serve as the lead agency to ensure local ownership upon completion of the plans.
- Results of the Lifeline Transportation Network Report should serve as the starting point for transportation gap analysis within each community,
- Each planning process should involve an extensive community involvement component, which would be tailored to each community for maximum effectiveness,
- Final community-based transportation plans should contain the following essential elements:
 - * demographic analysis of the area,
 - * documented community outreach strategies with results
 - * a listing of community-prioritized transportation gaps and barriers
 - * a listing of strategies or solutions to address identified gaps
 - * a listing of potential funding sources for solution implementation, and
 - * identified stakeholders committed to implementing the plan.

Upon completion of the plans, results were to be presented to various policy boards for consideration and incorporation into transit plans, and other planning, funding and implementation discussions.

Draft guidelines were reviewed by the board of the Bay Area Partnership⁸, MTC's Minority Citizen's Advisory Committee and the Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Working Group. This review stage was critical to the development of the CBTP program as all groups have a stake in the outcome of the planning process. Buy-in to the process at the beginning from all stakeholders is necessary to ensure confidence in the planning process itself, as well as the outcomes.

Once the guidelines were edited and finalized based on the comments received, MTC staff prepared a resolution for the Commission to adopt them. The resolution was presented to MTC's Planning and Operations Committee on October 11, 2002. The Committee referred the Resolution to the full Commission where it was adopted on October 23, 2002. The CBTP Guidelines are contained in Appendix 5.3.

3.2 Communities Identified for CBTP Program

In its initial phase of funding for the CBTP program, MTC identified twenty-five communities in which to conduct community-based transportation plans. These communities are a subset of a larger list of forty-four communities of concern noted in Section 1.3. The following map illustrates the location of the twenty-five communities.

⁸ The Bay Area Partnership Board is a confederation of the top staff of various transportation agencies in the region (MTC, public transit operators, county congestion management agencies, city and county public works departments, ports, Caltrans, U.S. Department of Transportation) as well as environmental protection agencies



MTC has allocated \$1,285,000 to complete plans in the initial twenty-five communities. To date, MTC has completed eight plans that focus on ten communities of concern. Eight CBTPs are currently underway, with the final seven of the initial twenty-five CBTPs to be launched within the next calendar year. MTC plans to fund a second phase of the program that will develop plans in the remaining nineteen (of forty-four) communities of concern in the upcoming fiscal year.

3.3 Stakeholders Involved in the Process

Community-based transportation planning is a collaborative process involving many stakeholders, including community residents, agencies that serve them, transit operators, congestion management agencies and MTC. A number of other stakeholders participate as well. As each community is unique, stakeholders vary for each CBTP.

The following list includes stakeholders that have participated in the completed CBTPs to date:

- Community residents
- Community-based organizations
- Transit operators
- Non-profit transportation and paratransit providers
- Congestion management agencies
- Elected officials
- Employers
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- Local municipalities
- County redevelopment agencies
- County community development departments
- County human/social services agencies
- County health departments
- Public Works departments
- Community College Districts
- Unified School Districts (K-12)
- Youth-serving organizations
- Child care facilities
- Senior centers
- County Aging and Adult Services
- Disability-serving organizations
- Hospitals
- Farm worker assistance organizations
- Programs serving immigrants
- Faith-based organizations
- Food and nutrition programs
- Libraries

3.4 Summary of Outreach Strategies

Outreach and community involvement is the key component of the CBTP process. The CBTPs completed to date have incorporated a broad range of outreach strategies to encourage community residents and stakeholders to provide input on transportation gaps and participate in the planning process. Given the range of outreach strategies available, communities are encouraged to tailor their outreach strategies, utilizing those that will be most effective at engaging residents and stakeholders in their particular community. Incorporating a variety of strategies is imperative to reaching a cross-section of any community. Local stakeholders are a good source for providing input about which strategies may be most effective for their area. This advice is sought before launching an outreach plan so that time and budget are not wasted on strategies that may not be effective.

Outreach strategies that have been utilized in the completed CBTPs are described below.

Questionnaire/Surveys

Most CBTP project teams have developed a questionnaire or survey to distribute among community agencies and residents to solicit input on community transportation needs and

priorities, as well as ideas about solutions to address these needs. By utilizing surveys, project teams are able to reach a wide cross-section of community residents. Surveys, which are translated into languages appropriate for the community, are distributed in a variety of ways:

- through project stakeholders
- through caseworkers at community agencies
- at existing community meetings or events
- in person, such as at bus stops, BART stations and community centers
- over the telephone – in the Dixon CBTP, businesses were surveyed over the phone about transportation-related concerns related to their employees
- through the mail – in the Richmond-area CBTP, over 6,000 surveys were mailed to households in the Richmond project area with a 20% response rate
- on-line – in the Richmond-area CBTP, a survey was posted on the lead CBO's website.

While input received through surveys may not be statistically significant, incorporating a survey instrument into a community outreach process offers an effective way to reach a broad spectrum of residents. Community members have some flexibility on when they provide their opinions – either on-the-spot, or completing and returning surveys at a later date to an address or location noted on the form.

Focus groups

Focus groups provide an opportunity to obtain more detailed, in-depth information from community residents or representatives about the transportation needs in their communities. Most of the CBTP teams conducted focus groups, including several in languages other than English. Most used the survey noted above as the basis for discussion.

Interviews

Several of the CBTP project teams conducted one-on-one interviews using the survey/questionnaire as a guide. For example, the central Alameda CBTP team conducted interviews with community representatives from 40 agencies, and found this to be an effective tool for obtaining input about transportation.

Drop-ins/Intercept Surveys

Several CBTP teams have held informal drop-in sessions at several locations within the project areas to have on-the-spot discussions with residents about how their transportation needs were being met. For example, the Napa CBTP conducted them at the Napa Transit Center (main transit hub in Napa), the Napa Valley College (focused on students and employees) and at the Salvation Army (focused on homeless or low-income residents attending the daily lunch program).

High School Interns

Several CBTP project teams have hired local youth to distribute surveys in the designated project areas. This proved to be a beneficial outreach strategy in several ways. First, the youth were familiar with the project area and were able to provide valuable input on strategic locations to administer surveys. Second, community members were receptive to completing surveys administered by youth who lived in the community. Finally, this strategy increases capacity in the community because youth are trained and paid for their work, taking valuable skills with them after the project is completed. In addition, they learn about the transportation planning

process in their communities. Hiring high school interns was particularly effective in West Oakland, where interns from McClymonds High School were paid and trained to administer surveys with community residents and enter the survey data into computer programs for analysis. At the end of the project, the students made presentations that summarized West Oakland residents' transportation needs to both the Oakland City Council and the Alameda County Congestion Management Agency Board of Directors.

Public Workshops

While public workshops can serve as a forum to provide and exchange information with community residents, it is difficult to schedule them when all sectors of the community can attend – working parents, older adults, youth, etc. Several of the CBTPs have held public workshops, with varying levels of attendance. For example, four workshops were conducted for the East Palo Alto Plan. Post cards were sent to every household and business in East Palo Alto and contained pertinent information (in English and Spanish) about the workshops, as well as other ways to provide input into the project. Even with this significant effort to promote the workshops, attendance was moderate – a total of 56 residents and business owners attended the workshops and provided input.

Attending Existing Community Meetings/Events

Several projects sent team members to attend existing community meetings to inform community members about the CBTP planning process and solicit feedback. In some cases, surveys/questionnaires were distributed to meeting attendees who were asked to either return completed surveys before leaving the meeting or return them as instructed at a later date.

Events

Some project teams attended local events that were held in the project community. For example, the Gilroy project team distributed surveys at two local events – Celebracion del Campo, a Migrant Farm Worker Fair, and the South County Workforce Investment Network Employment Fair. Both events were held during the outreach phase of the Gilroy project, and were a good opportunity to solicit input from local residents.

Websites

Information about the CBTPs, as well as how to provide input, has been posted on several websites – the Alameda County CMA, SamTrans, and, as noted above, the Neighborhood House of North Richmond.

Hotlines

Several projects established telephone hotlines to provide another opportunity for community residents to find out more information about the projects. Callers had the option to leave a message with their opinions.

Press Releases

Several project teams have sent out press releases to promote awareness of upcoming public workshops. A number of newspaper articles in local newspapers have been written about the community-based transportation planning process and have publicized ways to provide input into the planning process.

Newsletters

The Central Alameda CBTP team created a project newsletter that was used to both inform community members, and promote upcoming public workshops.

Outreach to the Business Community

The Dixon team hosted a breakfast meeting with the Mayor and the business community. Dixon businesses were invited to attend this meeting with the Mayor to 1) learn about the transportation services currently available in the community, 2) discuss transportation issues related to employee attraction and retention, and 3) suggest solutions that would address transportation needs.

Each CBTP incorporates multiple outreach strategies in their community involvement campaigns to effectively receive input from community members about transportation priorities in their neighborhoods. Outreach strategies are typically discussed with local stakeholders prior to implementation so that feedback about the most effective way to reach community members can be incorporated.

3.5 Summary of Transportation Gaps

A number of transportation gaps were identified in the region through the CBTP planning process. A synthesis of these needs is detailed below. Transportation gaps are organized in the following categories: transit service, transit amenities, public information, transportation for youth and children, access to autos, bicycle and pedestrian issues, transportation/land use gaps and affordability.

Transit Service

A number of gaps related to transit service have been identified, including:

- Hours of operation – some transit service does not run early enough in the morning, late enough at night, or on the weekends
- Frequency – some transit riders would prefer more frequent service than existing schedules permit
- Reliability – some transit routes do not stay on-schedule
- Connections –transit routes do not always transfer or connect with other services
- Spatial gaps – transit does not always serve destinations that people need to reach, such as schools, employment, medical care or grocery stores
- Travel time – travel time between stops and to destinations is too long, particularly when transfers are required to complete the trip
- Driver behavior – some drivers are reported to be insensitive to passengers’ needs (e.g. not stopping at designated bus stops) or are discourteous

Transit Amenities

A number of issues were raised related to transit amenities, including:

- Bus shelters – transit riders would like additional bus shelters for seating and protection from the elements
- Bus seating – in the event that a bus stop cannot accommodate a bus shelter, transit riders expressed interest in bus benches or seats

- Lighting – transit riders indicated that some bus stops are unsafe, especially at night due to lack of proper lighting

Public Information about Transportation Services

In some cases, the issue or gap was not a lack of service, but a lack of information about service that already existed. Problem areas are listed below.

- Transit route schedules are not always accurate
- Bus stops do not list enough information about the bus route/service
- Schedules/transit information is not always available in languages other than English
- Information about fares, transfer policies and routes is unclear
- Local shuttle services are not always well publicized

Transportation for Youth and Children

Transportation gaps specifically related to youth and children were mentioned, including:

- The cost of transportation for youth is an issue, particularly for a family with multiple children
- Buses are over-crowded - additional service is often needed at bell times – in the morning before school starts, and after school.
- Safety is an issue for some students who ride the bus (creating parental concern as well)
- If no school bus service is available, working parents using transit who drop children off at school or daycare before work can have lengthy and costly trips

Access to Autos

Cost is the primary barrier to auto ownership for low-income individuals and families. Auto expenses include the cost of the vehicle, insurance, maintenance, registration and gasoline. Those with low or limited incomes can find these costs prohibitive.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues

Safe routes for walking or riding a bicycle are an issue in many low-income communities.

Specific concerns include:

- Traffic speed is too fast near pedestrians
- Lack of crosswalks
- Sidewalks do not exist, particularly in unincorporated or rural areas
- Sidewalks are in poor condition (uneven pavement or gravel)
- Safety at night is a problem due to lack of proper lighting
- No bike lanes or areas to secure bicycles

Affordability

Low-income individuals and families reported that transportation, whether using transit or owning a car, is costly. BART fares and transit transfer policies were cited as expensive. Elements of owning and operating a car, as noted above, were mentioned as well.

Other

Some transportation concerns that were raised were specific to particular communities.

- Some neighborhoods experience a high volume of diesel truck traffic, which emit noxious fumes and pollution.

- Some Bay Area communities have an influx of migrant farm workers during the growing seasons. Transportation concerns particular to this population include service that does not operate during the hours it is needed (early mornings), service that does not travel to the desired destinations (agricultural locations), service that does not meet the needs of farm worker families (i.e. mothers and children that may be isolated from services), and language barriers.
- Some Bay Area communities are close to BART stations and tracks and experience significant noise from the trains.

3.6 Summary of Transportation Solutions

The following is a summary of the solutions to address community-prioritized transportation needs that have emerged from the CBTPs noted above in Section 3.5.

In an effort to determine potential for solution implementation, solutions went through an evaluation process that examined several criteria, such as cost estimates, available agency(ies) to implement solutions, available funding sources, timelines to implement solutions, and other operational, institutional or funding constraints (both public and private resources).

Solutions emerging from completed CBTPs include the following:

Transportation service/amenity solutions

- Make fixed-route bus improvements (frequency, hours of operation, routing)
- Install bus shelters
- Install bus seats or benches
- Initiate subsidized taxi service
- Initiate shuttle service (late-night, weekends)
- Initiate medical shuttle service
- Initiate volunteer driver programs to access services
- Organize vanpools to employment destinations
- Provide additional bus pass vendor outlets
- Provide improved training for drivers

Public information solutions

- Create a local transportation center to serve as a one-stop-shop for transportation information
- Provide transit information at bus stops and on buses
- Improve multilingual transportation information
- Institute collaborative approach to mobility management among local agencies

Children's transportation solutions

- Pursue safe routes to school, bikeways
- Expand or initiate children's shuttle service
- Expand transit marketing and advertising
- Relocate school bus stops to side streets

Auto-based solutions

- Provide older driver safety & mobility workshops
- Initiate or expand car sharing for low income families/individuals
- Offer or expand auto loan programs catering to low-income families/individuals

Pedestrian solutions

- Build or repair sidewalks
- Improve lighting for safety
- Stripe (or re-stripe) crosswalks to improve safety

Bicycle solutions

- Offer bicycle purchase assistance
- Install bicycle racks or lockers
- Create bike lanes

Affordability solutions

- Subsidize fares for low-income riders, youth
- Offer taxi voucher programs

Transportation/Land Use Solutions

- Build Transit Oriented Development projects that improve the link between transportation and land use

Appendix 5.4 contains the executive summaries of each of the completed CBTPs.

SUMMARY

The transportation needs that surfaced through the MTC-sponsored welfare to work transportation CBTP plans are similar throughout the region. Low-income residents in the Bay Area would like improvements to existing transportation services and amenities, information about transportation services, especially in languages other than English, the cost of transportation, especially for youth, access to autos, and children's transportation options.

A host of creative strategies has been proposed to address these transportation needs. These strategies do not focus solely on transit service improvements. They also include auto, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, as well as enhancements to transportation information, transportation affordability and transportation/land use connections.

Successful implementation will require project ownership from appropriate lead agencies, funding, effective coordination among implementing agencies, and the ability to address other operational, institutional or funding barriers.

A number of transportation solutions emerging from the welfare to work and community-based transportation plans have already been implemented. MTC created the Low-Income Flexible Transportation Program (LIFT) in 2000, a grant funding program designed to fund a variety of unique, locally-based transportation services. MTC has programmed \$13.7 million in state and federal dollars funding 32 projects consistent with the county welfare to work and community-

based transportation plans through three LIFT cycles. MTC has encouraged transportation and human service agencies to coordinate on project development, as well as providing a local funding match to the grant funding.

Through an update to its regional transportation plan in 2005, MTC created the Lifeline Transportation Program by dedicating up to \$216 million over 25 years for projects that improve mobility for low-income residents in the Bay Area. Lifeline funding, a combination of federal and state dollars, including JARC, is anticipated to begin in fiscal year (FY) 2008. To launch the program earlier, MTC allocated an additional \$18 million to fund projects during the 3-year interim period before the new funds are available. The program will be administered at the county level through the county congestion management agencies, with funds allocated based on the county's share of regional poverty population.

Lifeline program goals support community-based transportation projects that⁹:

- Are developed through a collaborative and inclusive planning process that includes broad partnerships among a variety of stakeholders such as public agencies, transit operators, community-based organizations and other community stakeholders, and outreach to underrepresented stakeholders,
- Address transportation gaps and/or barriers identified through a Community-Based Transportation Plan (CBTP), countywide or regional Welfare-to-Work Transportation Plan, or are otherwise based on a documented assessment of needs within the designated communities of concern. Findings emerging from one or more CBTPs may also be applied to other low-income areas, or otherwise be directed to serve low-income constituencies within the county, as applicable, and
- Improve a range of transportation choices by adding a variety of new or expanded services including but not limited to: enhanced fixed route transit services, shuttles, children's programs, taxi voucher programs, improved access to autos, capital improvement projects. Transportation needs specific to elderly and disabled residents of low-income communities may also be considered when funding projects.

Seven Bay Area counties issued a call for projects for communities to submit projects for consideration in Spring 2006 (the remaining two counties will issue their calls within a year). MTC received a list of recommended Lifeline projects for programming at the end of July 2006.

MTC will evaluate the interim Lifeline Program before the new Lifeline funds are received in FY 2008.

While Lifeline funding will help to implement transportation projects that will benefit low-income communities, other funding sources will also be necessary. Some projects may not be eligible for Lifeline funding based on federal and state funding guidelines. For example, although the issue of transportation affordability was raised in both the welfare to work and community-based transportation plans, transit pass subsidies are not eligible under several funding sources, including JARC¹⁰. Therefore, it will be important to continue to seek out

⁹ MTC Resolution 3726 Revised

¹⁰ According to FTA guidance issued September 6, 2006, JARC will fund the marketing and promotion of transit pass programs, but not the passes themselves. Vouchers for other transportation services may be eligible.

creative and collaborative solutions to some of the more complex transportation issues, as well as to advocate for additional funding for transportation services and programs.

It is also critical that local agencies, including transit operators and public works departments, evaluate their services and programs to ensure that they are serving the needs of low-income communities. While the LIFT and Lifeline Transportation Programs highlighted above, which are regionally-funded discretionary programs, are dedicated to the transportation needs of the region's low-income population, significantly higher levels of investment are directed to local streets and roads, as well as to local transit service each year. Local decision makers overseeing these investments are critical partners in enhancing these and other services to low-income constituents.

APPENDICIES

5.1 Executive Summaries of Regional and County Welfare to Work Plans

- Alameda
- Contra Costa
 - > 1999
 - > 2006 update
- Marin
- Napa
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
 - > 1998
 - > 2006 update
- Solano
- Sonoma

5.2 Regional Welfare to Work Transportation Plan – Goals and Strategies

5.3 Community-based Transportation Plan Guidelines

5.4 Executive Summaries of Completed Community-based Transportation Plans

- Richmond/North Richmond/Old Town San Pablo (February 2004)
- Central Alameda County – Cherryland/Ashland/South Hayward (June 2004)
- Dixon (August 2004)
- East Palo Alto (August 2004)
- Napa (September 2004)
- West Oakland (May 2006)
- Monument Corridor (Concord) (June 2006)
- Gilroy (July 2006)